

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough review of the present application, and respectfully request reconsideration in light of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 34, 37-42, 44-62 are pending in the application. Claims 35-36 and 43 have been cancelled. Independent claims 34 and 53 have been amended to better define the claimed invention. Subject matter of previously presented claims 38 and 42 is now recited in amended claim 38 which has been rewritten in independent form. Claims 44, 45, and 47 have been rewritten in independent form. Other previously presented claims have been amended to improve claim language. New claims 56-62 have been added to provide Applicants with the scope of protection to which they are believed entitled. No new matter has been introduced through the foregoing amendments.

The 35 U.S.C. 112, *first paragraph* rejection of claims 34-36, 38-47 and 49-55 is believed overcome in view of the amendments made to the rejected claims which now recites a PTFE coating having a thickness of "around a few microns." The newly added feature finds solid support in the original specification, e.g., page 2, lines 28-29.

The 35 U.S.C. 102(b) rejection of claims 34-35, 37, 43, 48, 53, and 54 as being anticipated by *Martucci* (U.S. Patent No. 5,170,011) and the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claims 36, 41, 49, and 55 as being obvious over *Martucci* in view of *Andre* (U.S. Patent No. 5,799,704) are moot or believed overcome in view of the above amendments.

In particular, independent claim 34 has been amended to recite a part for a motor vehicle, which part is adapted to house and transport a fuel comprising hydrocarbons, which part comprises a portion comprising **rubber**, which portion is permeable to hydrocarbons emitted from said fuel; and a polytetrafluoroethylene coating **directly bonded** to a surface of said rubber, which coating is

adapted to be disposed between the surface of said rubber and said fuel; wherein said coating has a thickness of around a few tens of microns; and said coating is sufficient to reduce the transmission of said emitted hydrocarbons through said coated portion of said part to not more than 2 g/24 hours.

Amended claim 34 is not anticipated by *Martucci* because the reference fails to disclose or teach the claimed portion comprising rubber. In *Martucci*, the coated part is made of an expanded polyamide material which, according to *Odian* ("Principles of Polymerization" submitted in the previous Amendment), is not qualified as elastomer (rubber).

Amended claim 34 is not obvious over *Martucci*, alone or in view of *Andre*, because the references singly or in combination fail to disclose, teach or suggest all limitations of the rejected claim, namely, the claimed polytetrafluoroethylene coating directly bonded to a surface of said rubber. The Examiner argued that it would have been obvious to apply an elastomer layer as taught by *Andre* over the polyamide layer of *Martucci* to provide protection to the polyamide. Assuming arguendo that the Examiner's rationale is correct, the resulting product would include a layer of polyamide (14, FIG. 2 of *Martucci*) sandwiched between the PTFE layer (12, FIG. 2 of *Martucci*) and the elastomer layer (14, FIG. 2 of *Andre*). In other words, the PTFE layer (12, FIG. 2 of *Martucci*) in the Examiner's combined product would not be directly bonded to a surface of the elastomer layer (14, FIG. 2 of *Andre*) as presently claimed.

Accordingly, amended independent claim 34 is patentable over the applied references.

Independent claim 53 has been amended to recite a motor vehicle, comprising a fuel system comprising a plurality of parts, said plurality of parts being adapted to contain a fuel comprising hydrocarbons for said motor vehicle, wherein: at least one of said plurality of parts is permeable to vaporous hydrocarbons contained in said fuel and has at least one surface exposed to hydrocarbon vapors; said at least one of the plurality of parts having a portion comprising rubber or plastic has a polytetrafluoroethylene coating on a surface of said portion in contact with said hydrocarbons; and

said coating has a thickness of **from 10 to less than 25 microns**, which is sufficient to reduce the emission of said hydrocarbons through said coated portion of said part to not more than 2g/24 hours. Amended independent claim 53 is patentable over the applied art of record, especially *Martucci*, because the reference fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed thickness. *Martucci*, at best, teaches a PTFE layer having a thickness as low as 0.001 inches or 25.4 microns, i.e., outside the claimed range.

The rejected dependent claims are considered patentable for the reasons advanced with respect to the respective independent claims.

Indication of allowable subject matter of claims 38-42, 44-47 and 50-52 in the absence of art rejections is believed appropriate and therefore courteously solicited.

Of particular note, the applied references clearly fail to disclose, teach or suggest the O-ring and valve membrane of independent claim 38, the PTFE spraying step of independent claim 44, the composition of independent claim 45, the order of the depositing and molding steps of independent claim 47.

New claims 56-60 are considered patentable for the reasons advanced with respect to the respective independent claims, i.e., claims 34, 38, 44, 45 and 53.

New independent claim 61 is patentable over the applied references because the references singly or in combination fail to disclose, teach or suggest a part for a motor vehicle, which part is a pipe adapted to house and transport a fuel comprising hydrocarbons, said pipe comprising a portion comprising plastic or rubber, which portion is permeable to hydrocarbons emitted from said fuel; and a polytetrafluoroethylene coating deposited on the **external surface** of the portion of said pipe; wherein said coating is sufficient to reduce the transmission of said emitted hydrocarbons through said coated portion of said pipe to not more than 2 g/24 hours. See page 8, line 5 of the specification. In *Martucci*, the PTFE layer is provided on the internal surface of the pipe.

New claim 62 is considered patentable for the reason advanced with respect to independent claim 61.

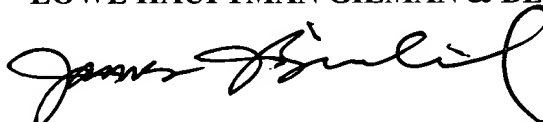
Each of the Examiner's rejections has been traversed/overcome. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Early and favorable indication of allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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